

Biological Review of Wireless Telecommunications Facilities (WTFs) in the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone

All WTF projects, regardless of whether ERB review is required, shall submit a Biological Inventory (per LIP §22.44.840.P) of the project site, to include a 50 foot radius around the project site and any staging area(s). For new WTFs within H1 or H2 habitat, a Biological Assessment (per LIP §22.44.1870) may be required.

Projects exempt from ERB review

The ERB shall not review certain wireless telecommunications facilities within the Santa Monica Mountains Coastal Zone when they are in the public right-of-way, provided that they meet the following standards:

1. The project needs to be a renewal of a wireless facility with little to no discernable changes to the existing facility. The planner, in conjunction with a staff biologist as needed, will review application materials to confirm that no coastal resources are being impacted.
2. Replacement poles of the same height and in the same location as poles being replaced shall be exempted from ERB review.

Projects subject to ERB review

The following circumstances will trigger the need for ERB review:

1. Wireless facilities outside of the ROW.
2. New and existing wireless facilities that require the erecting of new poles in new locations or trenching/excavation for undergrounding of equipment in or out of the ROW.
3. Wireless facilities that require trenching within the protected zone of oaks or other native trees or that require the trimming of tree canopies subject to the provisions of the LIP.

Best practices

1. Whenever possible, equipment cabinets for new facilities will be vaulted underground, and antennae will be co-located with other existing equipment on existing poles as long as the combined weight of all equipment does not create a toppling (and subsequent fire) hazard.
2. Clearing of vegetation at the base of poles and surrounding associated equipment shall be limited to the minimum required by the fire department, and shall be accomplished through the use of hand-operated equipment without the use of herbicides.
3. Cleared vegetation and spoils generated during facility installation or maintenance shall be taken to a landfill, and shall not be scraped to the side of the cleared area nor remain at the site.
4. All new and renewed wireless facilities in the ROW will be conditioned for earth-based colors of the surrounding area.
5. One pre-construction nesting bird survey shall be required during nesting bird season (Feb 1 – Aug 31), within 3 days of project implementation. Construction activity within 500 feet of any active bird nest shall be postponed, except at the discretion of the biological monitor, until the nest is vacated and juveniles have fledged and there is no evidence of a second attempt at nesting, as determined by a qualified biologist.